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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare the influence of selected student characteristics on composite National Teacher Examination (NTE) scores for students taught in a traditional or modified undergraduate teacher education program. The modified professional sequence resulted from a Mississippi statewide educational reform act which requires graduates to pass the NTE in addition to other mandates and represents a continued effort to seek better ways to train teachers. The subjects for this study were 862 undergraduate students for whom complete and usable data were available. Of this group, 227 students completed the traditional program and 635 completed the modified program. Data were collected through the use of American College Testing Program scores, NTE scores and personal data. When the composite NTE scores of the group were compared, no significant difference at the .05 level was observed between students taught in the traditional or modified programs. However scores for the group in the modified program were slightly higher. (Author)

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CHANGING A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND ITS EFFECT ON STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract

"CHANGING A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND IT'S EFFECT ON SELECTED STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS"

The purpose of this study was to compare the influence of selected student characteristics on composite NTE scores for students taught in a traditional or modified undergraduate teacher education program. More specifically, there will be no significant difference in the composite NTE scores for students with selected characteristics when they are taught in a traditional or modified sequence.

The modified professional sequence resulted from a statewide educational reform act which required graduates to pass the NTE in addition to other mandates and represents a continued effort to seek better ways to train teachers.

The subjects for this study were 862 undergraduate students for whom complete and usable data were available. Of this group, 227 students completed the traditional program and 635 completed the modified program. Data were collected through the use of ACT scores, NTE scores and personal data.

When the composite NTE scores of the group were compared, no significant difference at the .05 level was observed between them. However scores for the modified group were slightly higher.

Introduction

Education in this country has been subjected to criticism and change for many years. Some authorities feel that this process began in the Massachusett Bay Colony with the passage of educational laws in 1642 and then again in 1647. These laws, not only established schools, but their curriculum which included required courses for admission to Harvard. From this point to the present public education has been hotly debated.

In the late fifties, with the launching of the Russian Sputnik, the critics of public education were given additional reasons to downgrade the educational system. As the burden of Sputnik was placed on the shoulders of public education the critics were given renewed opportunities.

The debate over educational reform has continued since its beginning and shows signs of continued growth. No part of public education was spared in the debate. Elementary, secondary, and higher education have all received criticism. As this debate continued the Mississippi Legislature became involved.

The Mississippi Legislature responded to the critics in 1982 with the passage of the Educational Reform Act. This act enabled each university in the state to develop its own teacher education program. Among other pro-

visions, this act gave each institution permission to continue to design its own teacher education program so long as a high percentage of the graduates of the program passed the National Teacher Examination. Prior to this point the State Department of Education determined these programs and could do so again should a large number of the graduates not pass the NTE.

A number of factors were operating which served to motivate Mississippi State University in the development of a modified undergraduate professional educational program. Several of the more important factors which influenced the development of the modified undergraduate professional educational program were as follows:

(1) An effort was made to improve the institutions undergraduate teacher education program.
(2) The graduates of the teacher education programs were required to pass the NTE with a satisfactory score.
(3) The 1982 Education Reform Act required graduates of teacher education programs to pass 16 specified competencies dealing with effective teaching.
(4) To update this program, the current research literature related to effective teaching and effective schools was used in the development of this program.

The modified program consisted of a 33 hour professional education sequence of courses and represented a continuing effort on the part of the College of Education to train better and more effective teachers.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to compare the influence of selected student characteristics on composite NTE scores for students taught in a traditional or modified undergraduate teacher education program. More specifically, there will be no significant difference in the composite NTE scores for students with selected characteristics when they are taught in a traditional or modified sequence.

The subjects for this study were 862 undergraduate students for whom complete and usable data were available. Of this group, 227 students completed the traditonal program and 635 completed the modified program. NTE scores and personal data were used to secure information for the study.

The subjects who graduated prior to the Fall of 1988 were considered to be graduates of a traditional undergraduate professional education program. Those who graduated after the Fall of 1988 were considered to be graduates of a modified undergraduate professional education program.

In order to determine the effect of the selected student characteristics on the student NTE scores, a comparison of their scores was made after graduation. The analysis of variance model was used to treat the data.

The .05 level of significance was used to evlauate the rèlevant ratios. When the influence of the selected student characteristics of age, sex, and race on the composite NTE scores of the students taught through the use of a traditional undergraduate professional education program were compared with the scores of students taught through the use of a modified undergraduate professional education program no significant difference at the .05 level was found.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of selected student characteristics on NTE scores. The composite NTE score of students who graduated for a traditional undergraduate professional program were compared to those who graduated from a modified undergradute professional program.

When the NTE scores of the two groups were compared, no significant difference was observed between them at the .05 level. Even though the difference between the groups was not significant, the scores for the modified group were slightly higher than the traditional group.